



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS,
Barracks Detachment,
MARINE BARRACKS, Mare Island, California,

March 14, 1918.

Dear friend George:-

I am writing you a few lines "between spells" and wish to extend many thanks for your letter of recommendation which was received by me last Saturday morning. I can truthfully say that it is more than I expected as I hardly thought that I had the many good and commendable qualities that you mention, but even so I sincerely hope that I shall in no way fall below your estimation of me.

Your letter along with several others was presented personally by me last Monday to Major Small, who has charge of this work. They were filed away with an "OK" and my instructions were that I would be notified when the board wished to examine me further. While this camp does not guarantee a Commission on account of the number of men entering it, one will derive wonderful physical training as well as mental. The only thing that I now ask is the opportunity to enter and as the "Making Good" part of it, I consider will be where I am most needed by my country. So far, I know nothing as to the whereabouts of the school and nothing as to what the final qualifications are to be for entry into it. Of course being where I am I hear a number of rumors but so far nothing official and I have had enough experience already to know enough to believe nothing except it has an official signature at the bottom. In fact have commenced to follow the old saying of "Be sure of nothing you hear and only half of what you see".

I am indeed glad that I entered the Marine Corps. It is the best branch of the whole service. Naturally, being a Marine, I would be very apt to say that, but I am not alone in this conclusion, as I have heard men who are far more authentic than I, say the same thing. Of course we do not have the many different departments that the army has, as all the medical part is handled by the Naval Medical Board. But one does have a splendid opportunity to travel and to a great extent it is up to him to choose as to where he wants to go as nearly every detachment sent out is one of volunteers.

Mare Island is an ideal camp; more than that, it is a home for the recruited men, and considered one of the best posts that the Corps has. Climatic conditions are usually of the most favorable and one can enjoy very much his stay here, however short it may prove to be. Being a permanent post, the equipment and facilities are of the best and a fellow is inclined to be less antagonistic in the training period than would be the case under different conditions. Since I have arrived here, a large auditorium has been erected in which has been placed a number of different kinds of amusements such as Pool and Billiard tables; Card tables and Writing desks. In this building is also located the Library which has a number of thousands of the latest volumes, affording ample reading for all who wish to devote their time in that way. It is here that the chief paper of each large city of the U.S. comes so no matter from what corner of this glorious country of ours a man comes from, he can always have the privilege of sitting down and reading his own home paper. Last week five hundred new chairs^{iv} were placed in the Auditorium proper so that now there is no danger of having to stand up in case one, for some unknown reason

is a few minutes late. The main Barracks which have been built since the outbreak of the war is a modern four story building of steel structure possessing all the accomodations of the present time, having steam heat; hot and cold water; electric lights; maple floors, etc.

On the sixth of last November, I was given a change at clerical work and have been so engaged ever since. Am glad to say that my advance in this line was far more than I expected in so short a time. It is a good idea to get into clerical work to escape some of the camp drudgery. Anyone engaged in special duty work is known as "Dog Robbing" So that makes me a Dog Robber and I live on Bartlets Alley. We have several other equally notorious places in camp-Murderers Row-the fellows that get to sleep-in: Greasy Alley, the cooks and bakers: Monto Carlo--the name is enough to acquaint you with its aim in life: Bay View that part of the camp that faces the bay looking off toward San Francisco, a splendid part during nice weather: Bohemian Center--the musicians and others of asthetic and tempermental natures.

I have no idea as to how long I am to remain on Mare Island, but no matter as to how long or how short the memory of the "Lonely Isle" and the hospitality of the people in the surrounding towns will always occupy a pleasant spot in my "Sea of Memorie"

It is such a beautiful day outside that I am going to close and take a short stroll out into the sunshine.

Wishing to be remembered to all and thanking you again for your pains, I remain,

Very Sincerely,

Robert Grant